

TreeLink News

In the works

DNR URBAN and COMMUNITY FORESTRY PROGRAM

With Arbor Day and Arbor Month just around the corner, we thought it would be appropriate to talk about how to properly select and plant a tree. This is the first of a two-part series. Next month we will discuss the proper planting techniques and the care of your newly planted tree.

SELECTING YOUR TREE

Trees are for a lifetime, so it pays to spend time now making sure you get the best. In fact, several months before you plant is not too soon to start shopping. Here are four steps to help you make the right decisions:

- Think clearly about the purpose of your new tree (Examples: shade, privacy, aesthetics, wind-break, wildlife habitat, reduce erosion, etc.).
- Write down the limitations of the site where you will be planting (Examples: overhead wires, under-ground utilities, confined root zone, dry climate, sun and shade, clay soil, sidewalks, other trees, views, buildings, etc.).
- Select the species or cultivar to plant that best matches the above conditions you have identified. Planting a tree is a long-term commitment, it may not be a problem in your life-time, but it may become someone else's headache long after you are gone. Please use common sense when selecting your tree.
- Examine the trees before you buy, and buy for quality.

Trees come in several forms from the nursery: bare root, containerized and balled & burlapped (B & B).

- Bare root stock are shipped without soil around the roots. Bare root stock is normally the least expensive but, if handled improperly, can have the highest mortality.
- Containerized stock are trees grown in a container. Because roots are not disturbed at the time of planting, containerized stock suffer little transplant shock. The largest tree of this type is not always the best buy - it may have outgrown its container which can result in girdling roots.
- Balled and Burlapped are dug with a firm ball of soil around the roots, held securely in place with burlap, twine and sometimes a wire basket.

Look for these preferred physical characteristics in your trees:

Crown/Branches

- Is the tree symmetrical?
- Is there a single, well developed leader?
- Are buds plump and healthy looking?
- Are the branches well distributed around the trunk and considerably smaller than the trunk?
- Do branches approach the ideal spacing of 8" - 12" apart and form at least a 45 degree angle with the trunk (depending on species)?

Trunk

- Is it reasonably straight?
- Does the trunk taper nicely?
- Is the bark free of cuts and scrapes?
- Are pruning wounds healed over?
- Is it free of frost cracks, sun scald, swollen areas and evidence of disease or insect injury?

Roots

Bare Root Trees:

- Are the roots moist and fibrous?
- Careful storage is necessary to prevent drying, and planting must be completed before dormancy ends.
- When handling or transporting bare root stock, keep roots moist and protected from sun and wind at all times.

Containerized Trees:

- Are large, circling roots absent?
- Are pruned roots cut cleanly and no wider than an average finger?
- Are soil and roots joined tightly?

Balled and Burlapped (B & B) Trees:

- Is the root ball firm to the touch, especially near the trunk?
- Is the root ball adequate for the tree's size (rule of thumb: 1 foot for each inch of caliper)?

If the right tree is planted in the right place, it will be enjoyed by future generations. So, do your homework, follow the simple steps above and plant a tree. *Adapted from Tree City USA Bulletin # 19, The National Arbor Day Foundation.*



WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF
Natural Resources

Jennifer M. Belcher - Commissioner of Public Lands
Kaleen Cottingham - Supervisor

In the works (continued)

"The frog does not drink up the pond in which he lives."

-Indian Proverb

TRIVIA: True or False: About 100 pounds of nutrients are retained by a tree 60 years of growth but more than 200 pounds are returned to the soil. Most of this nutrient return is accomplished by the leaves and twigs that the tree drops every year.

(answers upside down below)

Picks and Shovels

On the Horizon

The purpose of the Washington Urban and Community Forestry Program is to assist communities and nonprofit groups in building self-sustaining urban forestry and tree care programs with strong local support.

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PLANTING - DAY TIPS

- **Safety:** Make sure each of your volunteers wears a safety vest and is properly informed of necessary precautions for the day.
 - **Camaraderie:** Provide stick-on name tags which volunteers can fill-out at the planting site to promote a friendlier planting day.
 - **Public Awareness:** Keep a few media kits on hand at your project site in case anyone stops by looking for more information about your project.
 - **Comfort:** If funding allows, provide your volunteers with work gloves. These can be washed and reused for next year's event.
 - **Tree Care:** Make sure your seedlings are kept moist at the planting site. You may want to keep them in buckets of shallow water.
 - **Species Placement:** In order to insure your volunteers plant the right species in the right location, pre-flag the location for each tree using a different color flag for each species. Put one flag in each bucket of species.
- Adapted from America's Treeways, National Tree Trust, February 1997.*

HOT OFF THE PRESS

The 1997 ArborLeaf, from the Washington Arbor Day Council, is now available. This annual publication provides several ideas and models for planting projects that particularly involve school children. Along with the newsletter, the council provides and opportunity to purchase 1 year old conifer and ornamental hardwoods for tree planting events. They also honor people for extraordinary service through tree planting events and special projects, and they award grant money and trees to applicants with highly visible school or community projects throughout the state. To receive a copy of the ArborLeaf and seedling order form, contact John Bergvall at 360/902-1027. The deadline for applications and order forms is March 18.

WASHINGTON COMMUNITY FORESTRY COUNCIL MEETING

The spring meeting for the Washington Community Forestry Council will be on March 13, 9:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. at the Yakima Arboretum in Yakima. The agenda includes planning for Urban and Community Forestry Month. The public is welcome to attend. For more information, contact tish carr at 360/902-1703.

FREE STORM DAMAGE KIT

Property owners whose ornamental trees or forest stands were damaged by recent storms are invited to request a free information kit from the Washington DNR by phoning 1-800-527-3305 and pressing extension "0". The "Tree and Forest Storm Damage" information kit addresses ways for landowners to respond to, or mitigate, damage to individual trees or to forest stands caused by wind, snow, ice and excessively heavy rain. The kit includes information about: storm damage to ornamental and forest trees, proper pruning and tree care, wildfire safety, safety tips for outdoor burning and several "Backyard Forest Stewardship" topics.

NATIONAL TREE TRUST SEEDLING AND GRANT RECIPIENTS

The National Tree Trust is busy shipping 30,600 seedlings to 17 organizations in 11 communities throughout Washington State as a result of their Community Tree Planting (CTP) program. Three organizations received grants totaling \$13,725.00 from the Partnership Enhancement Program. This program was established to promote public awareness and a spirit of volunteerism in support of tree planting, maintenance, management, protection and cultivation in rural and urban areas. Applications for the 1998 program year are now available. If your organization would like further information or to be added to the mailing list, please contact the National Tree Trust Foundation, 1120 G Street, NW Suite 770, Washington, DC, 20005, (202)628-8733.

A growing list of support materials available from our office, call (800)523-8733.

- **Tree Planter's Guide:** How to plant trees in Olympia. A great guide on how to plan and select the right trees for your property.
- **Common Tree Diseases of British Columbia.** An excellent resource with colored pictures.
- **Native Plant Alliance:** A Manual of Native Plant Communities for Urban Areas of the Pacific Northwest. Please contact Cascade Biomes at (206)322-0528. \$5.00 per copy, plus \$1.50 for shipping and handling.

March

- 13 Washington Community Forestry Council Meeting at the Yakima Arboretum, Yakima from 9:30 -3:00. Contact tish carr at (360)902-1703.
- 14 **Deadline for DNR Community Grant Applications. Contact Tracy Salisbury at (800)523-8733.**
- 14 **Deadline for National Arbor Day Poster Contest. Contact Tracy Salisbury at (800)523-8733.**
- 21 "Helping the Community Forest Weather the Storm" Workshop, Ramada Inn Governor's House in Olympia. Contact tish carr at (360)902-1703.
- 27 Pruning Landscape Trees & Shrubs, 9 - 3, Graham Visitors Center, Washington Park Arboretum. Contact CUH at (206)685-8033.

April

- 9 **Washington State Arbor Day**
- 25-26 Arbor Day Fair, Seattle. Contact University of Washington at (206)543-0867.
- 25 ISA Certified Arborist Exam, Seattle. Contact PNW ISA at (206)784-1945.